

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7091
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 1676

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, CS
SUBJECT: JOSE FIGUERES ON CIA

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. UNDER HEADLINE "FIGUERES PRAISES WORK OF CIA," AND FIGUERES' QUOTE THAT CIA "HAS DONE MORE GOOD THINGS THAN BAD," LEADING DAILY LA NACION APRIL 20 CARRIES EFE REPORT ON NEW REPUBLIC INTERVIEW OF EX-PRESIDENT JOSE FIGUERES BY KEN BODE. ACCOUNT HIGHLIGHTS A NUMBER OF FIGUERES "REVELATIONS." AMONG THESE: GOCR ALLOWED CIA CHIEF IN COSTA RICA DURING FIRST FIGUERES ADMINISTRATION (1954-1958) TO ATTEND SOME GOVERNMENT MEETINGS; CIA FUNDED LABOR CENTER AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC MAGAZINE DIRECTED BY CURRENT GOVERNMENT PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE LUIS ALBERTO MONGE DURING

MID-FIFTIES; ONE PART OF CIA BACKED SOMOZA EFFORT TO OVERTHROW FIGUERES ADMINISTRATION IN 1955 (AS FAVOR FOR SOMOZA ASSISTANCE IN OVERTHROW OF ARBENZ IN 1953),
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WHILE ANOTHER BRANCH OF CIA SIMULTANEOUSLY WAS IN EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH FIGUERES; BAY OF PIGS OPERATION WAS ORDERED BY THEN VICE-PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON BEHIND THE BACK OF PRESIDENT EISENHOWER, END UNCLASSIFIED.

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2. COMMENT: THIS IS CLASSIC FIGUERES, AND COSTA RICANS ARE USED TO IT. DON PEPE HAS A CONSISTENT RECORD OF TELLING ANYONE WHO ASKS HIM THAT CIA HAS DONE MORE GOOD THAN BAD, IS NEEDED BY THE FREE WORLD, AND THAT HE HAS WORKED WITH THE AGENCY OVER THE YEARS TO ACHIEVE MUTUAL OBJECTIVES, AND THAT WIDESPREAD CRITICISM OF CIA IS UNFOUNDED. THE LAST PUBLISHED FIGUERES REMARKS ALONG THESE LINES APPEARED IN 1976 INTERVIEW WITH MEXICAN DAILY EXCELSIOR.

3. FIGUERES REMARKS LINKING PLN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE LUIS ALBERTO MONGE TO CIA FUNDEB MAGAZINE SHOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT LATTER'S ELECTION CHANCES. IN FACT MONGE MAY BENEFIT. MODERATE LIBERACIONISTAS AND INDEPENDENTS HAVE BEEN LUKEWARM TO MONGE'S CANDIDACY EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER HIS "LEFTIST" TENDENCIES. DON PEPE'S LINKAGE OF MONGE TO CIA SUPPORTED MAGAZINE MAY HELP UNDERCUT SUCH CRITICISM.
KILDAY

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Message Attributes

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